CARE during the year. Which are scrutinised by the Department of Women and Child Development.

(b) According to the available information, the instance of imprisonment of Executive Director of CARE due to financial irregularities occurred in U.S.A. over 10 years ago for which action had been initiated by the CARE's New York Office itself. These irregularities had nothing to do with CARE's activities in India. Therefore, no need for special scrutiny of CARE's accounts has been considered necessary.

(c) In view of (b) above, the question does not arise.

Refund of earnest money by Ramagundam Units of FCI

1936. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is the practice of the Fertilizer Corporation of India to demand deposit of earnest money from the tenderers including small scale industrial units;

(b) whether it is Government's policy to exempt small scale industrial units from depositing earnest money while tendering for works in such organisations;

(c) if so, the amount of earnest money received by the Ramagundam unit of FCI and not refunded so far to tenders together with the names of the firms involved so: and

(d) the action taken to refund the deposit at the earliest?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA): (a) No Earnest Money Deposit (EMD) is taken by the Fertilizer Corporation of India (FCI) from small scale industries registered with National Small Industries Corporation (NSIC). except at the Corporation's Talcher Unit where EMD was being collected from all tenders including small scale undertakings against press tenders. However, instructions have been issued by FCI to their Talcher unit on 21-8-1990 that EMD should not be demanded from small scale industries.

(b) Yes, Sir. There are instructions from the Government to exempt small scale industrial units registered with the public enterprises concerned or with the National Small Industries Corporation Ltd., from depositing earnest money.

(c) No EMD is pending for refund to any small scale industrial unit by Ramagundam unit of FCI.

(d) In view of the position stated in part (c) above, no action is required to be taken to refund the deposit.

Conversion of agricultural land for housing purpose

1937. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware that large tracts of fertile lands have been converted into commercial projects for housing purpose;

(b) whether Government are also aware that with this continuous trend fertile land would become scarce affecting thereby agricultural production adversely; and

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to check this trend?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI UPENDRA NATH VERMA): (a) to (c) Conversion of agricultural land into projects for housing as well as other non-agricultural uses is taking place on account of growing population and diversification of economic activity.

With a view to check this trend, Government of India have been repeatedly impressing on the States and UTs that good agricultural lands should not be diverted to non-agricultural purposes. Many States have also made provisions in their

land laws/rules for regulating conversion of agricultural land to non-agricultural uses.

New varieties of Maize

1938. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA: Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether the scientists of Punjab Agricultural University have developed a new variety of maize 'Megha' whose yield is about 25 per cent more than the local variety;

(b) whether this new variety would be grown in Himachal Pradesh; and

(c) the area marked in other States for growing the new variety of maize?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE AND COOPERATION IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) This has also been found suitable for growing in Himachal Pradesh.

(c) No such areas have been marked in other States.

Jobs to Job seekers registered with the Employment Exchanges

1939. CHOWDHRY HARI SINGH: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the period for which the name of the job seeker can be kept in the live register of the employment exchange after getting registered with it;

(b) what would be the fate of a candidate, so registered if he does not get a job for quite some time and crosses the age limits normally prescribed by Governmental or semi-Governmental departments for the jobs for which he is registered;

(c) whether Government/the Exchange concerned provide any help to such candidates in the above circumstances; and

(d) what is Government's attitude in such cases in the context of its declared policy of providing right to work to all able bodied people?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR AND WELFARE (SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN): (a) According to the procedure prescribed by the Central Government the registrations of the job seekers are valid for period of 3 years after which these are required to be renewed.

(b) to (d) Employment Exchanges are only one amongst several agencies for placement of job seekers. While no special consideration is given by Employment Exchanges in sponsoring the candidates who become overage for Government jobs their names are forwarded against suitable vacancies notified by private sector establishments. Besides, they are also motivated and assisted for taking up self employment venture.

Sugar prices

1940. SHRI VIREN J. SHAH: Will the Minister of FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES be pleased to state:

(a) what are the reasons for the continuing pressure on sugar prices in spite of a record production of 105 lakh tonnes of sugar which is 18 lakh tonnes higher than the last year's production during the current season;

(b) what steps are being taken to relieve the pressure on sugar prices?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF FOOD AND CIVIL SUPPLIES (SHRI RAM PUJAN PATEL): (a) and (b) The sugar production during the current season is likely to be about 109 lakh tonnes. As a result of various measures taken by the Government the prices of sugar in various parts of the country have remained fairly stable during the past few months.